

Appl. No. 09/830,730

Amendment dated February 23, 2004

Reply to Non-Final Office Action of October 22, 2003

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 23, line 21 through page 24, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

Suitable substitutes or partial substitutes for the zeolite are layer silicates of natural and synthetic origin. Layer silicates such as these are known, for example, from patent applications **DE-B-23 34 899**, **EP-A-0 026 529** and **DE-A-35 26 405**. Their suitability is not confined to a particular composition or structural formula, although smectites and especially bentonites are preferred. Crystalline layer-form sodium silicates corresponding to the general formula $\text{NaMSi}_x\text{O}_{2x+1}\cdot y\text{H}_2\text{O}$, where M is sodium or hydrogen, x is a number of 1.9 to 4 and y is a number of 0 to 20, preferred values for x being 2, 3 or 4, are also suitable substitutes for zeolites and phosphates. Crystalline layer silicates such as these are described, for example, in European patent application **EP-A-0 164 514**. Preferred crystalline layer silicates corresponding to the above formula are those in which M is sodium and x assumes the value 2 or 3. Both β - and δ -sodium disilicates $\text{Na}_2\text{Si}_2\text{O}_5\cdot y\text{H}_2\text{O}$ are particularly preferred.